

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2006

The Honorable Henry Bonilla
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
2362 Rayburn H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
1016 Longworth H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Bonilla and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We write to request that you preserve the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) in the Fiscal Year 2007 Agriculture Appropriations bill and provide funding at least equal to, and preferably more than, last year's level. As you know, President Bush has proposed in his 2007 Budget to completely eliminate all funding for this vital nutrition program. We strongly urge you to reject this proposed elimination and to adequately fund the CSFP so that seniors and children who rely on it as a fundamental source of healthy foods will get the nutrition they need.

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program will provide more than 6.4 million food packages for over 400,000 mothers, infants, children and, primarily, low-income seniors across the country in 2006. CSFP food packages do not provide a complete diet, but supplement needed sources of nutrients typically lacking in the diets of the recipients. The typical package includes items such as canned tuna fish, meat and poultry, peanut butter, formula, milk, juice, oats, rice, beans, cheese, cereal, and canned fruits and vegetables.

To be eligible, seniors must have income at or below 130% of the federal poverty line (currently about \$12,400 a year for a single person and \$16,700 for a couple). CSFP also provides food packages to low-income pregnant and post-partum women, infants, and children up to age six, generally up to 185% of the federal poverty line.

Cutting off these nutritious commodities would impact the health and well-being of more than 400,000 Americans in 32 states, the District of Columbia and on two Indian reservations. While the President's proposal includes a 6-month transitional food stamp benefit for seniors losing CSFP, the proposed \$20 benefit will not come near to replacing the nutrition gap that would be widened by CSFP's elimination and would do nothing to address their needs after the 6-month period expires.

As you begin the appropriations process for Fiscal Year 2007, we wanted to remind you of the critical significance of this program and urge you to reject its proposed elimination.

We appreciate your consideration of this important request.

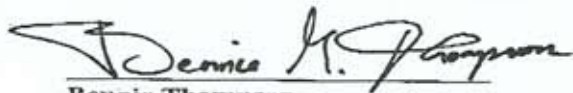
Sincerely,



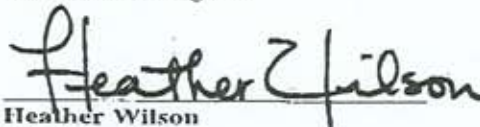
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Member of Congress



Joe Baca
Member of Congress



Bennie Thompson
Member of Congress



Heather Wilson
Member of Congress

Joe Brady
Bry McCallum

Brad Sherr

Ellen Tusker

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